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This study encompasses family influences on education and, particularly, values held by mothers toward the Head Start Program. In interviews, 200 Negro mothers indicated satisfaction with the educational experiences in Head Start, especially socialization of children. Interviewees felt that the mother role was important. They expressed the most common problems at home as either disciplinary or economic. Mothers perceived themselves as the most important influence on their children, teachers were a close second. Formal learning took place in school, and mothers depended on no significant community agencies for help in the education of their children. Although 73 percent aspired to a college education for their children, only 23 percent thought it would be a reality. Choosing well-known men as models for emulation for their sons, mothers selected civil rights workers of high standards, morals, and courage; and for daughters, mothers selected women of talent, achievement, and positive personality. When asked about models they had actually known, the respondents stressed positive values of economically responsible male roles and maternally responsible female roles. Fourteen tables are included in this document. (DO)

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Project I

A STUDY OF FAMILY INFLUENCES ON THE EDUCATION OF NEGRO LOWER-CLASS CHILDREN

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In recent years there has been an increasing interest in trying to provide children in lower social class environments with some means for being able to successfully reach and compete in middle-class American society. One means that has developed and created a great interest has been the Head Start Program and various related approaches. While there has been a great deal of interest, as well as some research directed at what happens to children in Head Start programs, there has been little attention directed to what happens to these children when they are at home or in the community that may have either positive or negative effects on the experiences they are getting in school. On the most general level, our study was concerned with what mothers did and felt in areas related to the children's actual experiences in one program. More specifically, our study has been concerned with some ways in which mother's values and behavior may influence the formal educational experiences of their children in a particular Head Start program.

We will present our findings as follows: (1) The nature and the methodology of the study, (2) some values held by the mothers toward the Head Start Program related to both their children and themselves, (3) some general beliefs and behavior

patterns of the mothers with regard to rearing their children, and (4) role models, both famous and actually known, that the mothers would like to see or not see their sons and daughters emulate when they grow up.

Methodology and Sample

A questionnaire was developed and pre-tested. Thirty-eight general items were included in the final instrument. Nine women, all with experience in community work, were trained to do 200 interviews. Of the nine interviewers, seven women did 20 interviews each, one did 25, and one did 35. The sample of mothers was randomly taken from selected lists of mothers with children enrolled (Spring, 1967) in the full-year Head Start Program of Philadelphia. The interviewers reported a high degree of co-operation from the mothers to participate in the study.

The average (median) age of the mothers interviewed was 30. 4 years. Each mother had one child in the three to five years of age range who was enrolled in the Head Start Program. Ninety-three percent of the mothers had other children. The average number of children for the entire mother group was 4. 4. The age range was from one to fifteen. At the time of the study, 75 percent of the mothers were neither employed full or part time

outside of the home. All of the mothers included in the study were Negro.

Mother's feelings About the Head Start Program

It was the mother's overwhelming feeling that the Head Start school experience was a positive and significant influence on their children. When asked about the kinds of influences the school experience was having on their children the most common responses were: 29 percent, "he was getting along better with other children; " 20 percent, "he was showing more interest in more things and activities;" and, 20 percent, "he was more self responsible. " In general the common theme suggested by the mothers was that their child was being effectively socialized by his school experience. (see Table 1)

The mothers' enthusiastic response to their children being in school is a reflection not only of what the program does for the child, but also the ways that the mother considers the situation as favorable for herself as a person in general and as a mother in particular. To get at this point we asked the mothers two related questions. First, what did they like best about their child being in school, and second what did they like least about their child being in school. To the first question, the mothers

responded as follows: 36 percent referred to "the self improvement they could see in their child" and 20 percent mentioned "the opportunity for him to meet other children." (Table 2) With regard to the second question, 60 percent responded "nothing". For the remaining 40 percent it was in most cases minor criticisms or suggestions; i. e., "school doesn't keep him long enough", "getting him to and from school", "he wants the same attention at home", etc.

The mothers were also asked to assess their children's feelings about school. Ninety-nine percent of the mothers said their children liked school most of the time. Of those mothers, 46 percent felt their child liked school more than did other children of the same age, 53 percent felt it was about the same and one percent felt it was less.

The mothers were also asked what the child appeared to like the most and least about being in school. The things the children liked the most were: drawing and coloring, 25 percent; stories, toys and music, 21 percent; and playing with other children, 19 percent. (see Table 3) Forty-four percent of the children disliked "naptime" the most. But another 30 percent of the mothers reported that there was nothing their child disliked

about school.

It seems clear that the mothers felt that the Head Start Program was doing a good job. Even among the 29 percent who felt the program could do a better job, the reasons given centered around the limitations of the school itself. For example, the need for better physical facilities and more teachers. Furthermore, it appears that the children are happy with their experiences in the Head Start Program, at least as defined by their mothers.

Some General Considerations of Child Rearing

A second part of our study was concerned with some of the patterns of child rearing that were followed in the home by the mother. Some knowledge about child rearing in the home is important not only in itself, but also for how it is related to what is being done in the schools. The analysis of child rearing patterns in the home focuses around the mother because this is almost always her responsibility and because in our sample 40 percent of the mothers reported no husband or father present at the time of the interview.

The mothers were asked what they considered to be their greatest problem in bringing up their children. To this question

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40 percent mentioned problems of discipline and control, 28 percent said they did not have sufficient money to meet the basic needs of child care and rearing, and 12 percent felt the problem was keeping their children away from "bad influences" in the neighborhood.

The mothers were also asked what they liked the most and the least about being a mother. Two-thirds (65 percent) of the mothers said that what they liked the most about being a mother was "raising their child and watching him grow". Another 26 percent simply said "loving them". There were a number of different factors mentioned by the mothers as to what they liked least about being a mother. Most often mentioned (23 percent) were "limitations of money, personal sacrifices or no husband to help." While the women mentioned a number of problems in being a mother, none indicated any rejection of motherhood itself. It is clear in this study (and in others by the writer) that the role of mother is of great importance to lower-class Negro women.

We are interested in who were the "significant others" in the rearing of the child in the Head Start Program. The child, at this young age, may be influenced by a variety of different individuals. We asked the mothers the following question: "Who do

you think has the greatest influence on your child at the present time? Who has the second and third greatest influence?" The mothers named as most important themselves in 57 percent of the cases, the teacher in 21 percent and the father in 14 percent. As second most important, 29 percent of the mothers named themselves, 21 percent the father and 20 percent the teacher. And as third most important, the teacher was mentioned by 30 percent, father by 21 percent and a brother or sister by 21 percent. (see Table 4)

If we put together all three categories of persons mentioned as having either the first, second or third greatest influence on the child, we find that 90 percent of the mothers named themselves, the teacher was mentioned by 70 percent, the father by 55 percent, a brother or sister by 29 percent and a grandmother by 23 percent. This indicates that statistically the two most influential figures were the mother and the teacher. The relatively low influence of the father is to a great extent a reflection of the fact that for 40 percent of the women there was no husband or father present at the time of the interview. If we take only these cases where there was a husband or father present, then we see that he is just as apt to be defined as influential (92

percent) as was the mother.

The mothers were also asked about certain educational functions that were performed in the home with the child. First, the mothers were asked for a rough description of the time spent in a variety of activities by the child during a typical day. (see Table 5) The mothers indicate that their children spend about two-thirds of an hour per day doing some work related to school. Almost all of the mothers say that someone (usually themselves) helps the child with learning in the home. About 50 percent mention reading to him and another 25 percent helping him color or draw. In our sample we find that formal learning for the child takes place in school with some help from the home, but little or no help from any other sources. The mothers were asked if there were any places besides school, with adults in charge, that their child goes to play or learn. About half of the mothers said there were no such places. Almost all who did mention a place referred to Sunday school, but, this was limited to an hour or two every week or so.

The mothers were also asked to indicate their aspirations and expectations for their children's future. One of the assumptions of the Head Start Program is that by starting the

child earlier in school, he is provided with the skills to stay in school longer and participate more effectively. Certainly, today, extended education reaching through college years is a value shared by almost all Americans. We asked the mothers how many years of school they would like to see their children receive. To this question 73 percent said a college education. But when we asked the mothers how many years of school they actually expected their children would get, only 23 percent said a college education. So it is clear for this group of mothers there is a wide gulf between their ideal aspirations and the real world in which they and their children live.

Role Models

In this section we will examine some of the mother responses with regard to the role models they would or would not like to have a son and a daughter emulate. First we do this with regard to famous or well known people they have heard of and who were alive at the time of the interview. In the next section we will look at role models the mothers have actually known.

Role Models - Well Known

Positive Male Models. The mothers were asked "of all the people you have ever heard of, who are alive today, which one

would you like most to have a son grow up to be like?" They were then asked why they had selected this person. There were 184 mothers who responded to this question and 27 different names were mentioned. The men most often mentioned were Martin Luther King (28 percent), Reverend Leon Sullivan (12 percent) and Jackie Robinson (11 percent). When the names mentioned are examined by racial background we see that 84 percent of the male role models mentioned were Negro. (The white male most often mentioned was Robert Kennedy by 7 percent.) When the distribution of role models is examined by professions we see that 40 percent are involved in civil rights, 24 percent in sports, 22 percent in entertainment and 14 percent in politics. (It should be kept in mind that these professional categories are not always mutually exclusive.)

Table 6 gives the various reasons why the mothers said the well known males were selected as role models. It can be seen that the two most common categories of answers "high standards, morals and courage" and "helped the Negro race" were given by 57 percent of the respondents. More specific illustrations of their reasons are seen in some quotes from the respondents. For example, "not afraid to stand up for what he

believes in" (King); "the contributions he has made to his race" (Sullivan); or, "he tries to help people and can be trusted. " (R. Kennedy)

Positive Female Models. The mothers were asked "of all the people you have ever heard of, who are alive today, which one would you like most to have a daughter grow up to be like? They were also asked why they had selected this person. There were 183 mothers who responded to this question and 27 different names were mentioned. The person named most often was Marian Anderson (29 percent) followed by 14 percent each naming Mahalia Jackson and Jacqueline Kennedy. When the names are compared by racial background we see that 77 percent are Negro. By far the most common area of professional involvement for the well known female models was in entertainment (78 percent).

Table 7 presents reasons given by the respondents as to why the women were selected as positive role models. It is seen that talent and achievement along with positive personality characteristics are the overwhelmingly important reasons for selection. Illustrations of the respondents' views of persons selected and why, are "her sincerity and contribution to the

world" (Marian Anderson), "because she is a great singer" (Mahalia Jackson) and "she is an ideal woman and mother" (Jacqueline Kennedy).

Negative Male Models. The mothers were asked "of all the people you have ever heard of, who are alive today, which one would you like least to have a son grow up to be like? They were also asked why they selected the person. There were 187 mothers who responded and 21 different names were given. The names most often mentioned were Cassius Clay (30 percent), George Wallace (18 percent) and Cecil Moore (15 percent). When the persons named are examined by race we find that 61 percent are Negro. By professional involvement there are 37 percent in politics, 30 percent in sports and 22 percent in civil rights.

The reasons given by the mothers as to why they selected these persons as negative role models are presented in Table 8. The most common explanation of "too much mouth" or "braggart" (38 percent) in almost all cases was applied to Cassius Clay. And "bigot" or racist" (22 percent) were reasons given almost always for George Wallace. Some specific quotes as given by respondents were "too much mouth" (Clay), "his prejudice hurts us" (Wallace) and "he does more harm than good for his race" (Moore).

Negative Female Models. The mothers were asked "of all the people you have ever heard of, who are alive today, which one would you like least to have a daughter grow up to be like?" They were also asked why they selected this person. There were 172 mothers who answered and 20 different names were mentioned. The two names which dominated the list were Elizabeth Taylor (38 percent) and Governor Lurleen Wallace (24 percent). Eartha Kitt was mentioned by 10 percent of the respondents. It can be seen that of the number of negative female role models mentioned those who were Negro was small (18 percent). And about two-thirds of the females were in the entertainment field.

Table 9 shows the reasons given by the respondent as to why the well known women were selected as negative role models. About half of the women gave the reason of "no morals (or steals husbands)," and this explanation was in almost all cases applied to Elizabeth Taylor. That the person was a "bigot" or "racist" was given by 26 percent and this almost always referred to Lurleen Wallace. Quotes from respondents further illustrate the above reasons for defining particular women as negative role models. "Takes other people's

husbands" (Taylor), "she continues the hate and segregation of her husband" (Wallace) and "she looks down on her own race. " (Kitt).

Summary. One thing that appears clear in this study is that the civil rights movement is highly important in providing male role models that Negro mothers can hold for their sons. What is most surprising is that while this would have been expected for positive role models it is also true for negative role models. So while there is a high positive identification with the relatively moderate civil rights activities of Martin Luther King and Leon Sullivan there is a high negative rejection of the more agressive civil rights activities of Cecil Moore, Adam Clayton Powell and Cassius Clay.

Among the well known women mentioned there was little direct involvement in the civil rights movement. For the female role models the values focus on talent and achievement in the entertainment field. It is also of interest that while the respondents most often mention Negro males as both positive (84 percent) and negative (61 percent) role models, such is not the case for the female role models selected. Among the female role models, 77 percent of the positive ones were Negro

but only 18 percent of the negative ones.

It should be kept in mind that the role models, both positive and negative, mentioned by the Negro mother respondents are obviously related to the particular time of the study; at some later date other persons probably would be named. How long particular persons would continue to be common role models to the respondents is not of major importance. What is important is what these selected role models represent as values the mothers think are good and bad with reference to the future of their children. The fact that we are studying a Negro population indicates that the range of possible role models are different from what one would expect for the white population. That is, the importance attached to the civil rights movement for Negro men and to one of the few areas of fame and achievement for the Negro women - that of entertainment. These are two areas one would not expect to be as important if white mothers at the same social class level were asked the same questions.

Role Models - Known

In this section we move from the more general area of famous or well known role models to role models actually

known by the mothers. The interest here is in what types of persons, both in their relationships to the respondents and the kinds of characteristics they possess, the mothers would or would not like to see sons and daughters emulate.

Positive Role Models. The mothers were asked "of all the people you actually know or have known who would you like most to have a son grow up to be like?" They were further asked why they selected that person. Their husband (the child's father) was most often mentioned (29 percent). The next two most common categories were males in non-family relationships with 15 percent mentioning their minister and 14 percent a teacher, M. D., politician or businessman. This was followed by 10 percent naming a brother and 9 percent their fathers. For the total group of respondents, 49 percent were selected from the Immediate Family (father, husband, brother, son), 24 percent from Secondary Relatives (grandfather, uncle, in-laws, cousins) and 27 percent from Non-Relatives.

Table 10 shows the distribution of reasons given as to why individuals were selected. It is seen that positive personality characteristics are mentioned about half the time. The characteristics of a male being responsible and hard worker, so

important to lower class Negro women, is referred to 20 percent of the time. Such descriptions as "he is a hard worker, good provider and plays with the children" (husband) or Christian and well mannered and kind" (grandfather) illustrate some of the mothers' descriptions of their choices of positive male role models.

Positive Female Models. The mothers were asked "of all the people you actually know or have known who would you like most to have a daughter grow up to be like?" They were also asked why they selected that person. Most often mentioned were their own mothers (22 percent) and a teacher, missionary worker or M. D. (22 percent). After that 19 percent said a friend, 10 percent a grandmother and another 10 percent an aunt or cousin. Here 35 percent of the choices are from the Immediate Family (mother, sister, self), 25 percent from Secondary Relatives (grandmother, aunt, in-laws, cousin) and 40 percent from Non-Relatives.

Table 11 indicates that over half of the respondents gave positive personality characteristics as reasons for their choice of female role models for their daughters. Quotes from the mothers further illustrate what they consider to be positive

factors. "She constantly helps others and is interested in their welfare" (mother); "success in her work and a good mother" (friend); and, "she is everything I think a lady should be" (a teacher).

Negative Role Models. The mothers were asked "of all the people you actually know or have known who would you like least to have a son grow up to be like?" They were also asked their reasons for selecting that person. Most often mentioned were "neighbors or friends" (48 percent). Also named were an uncle by 13 percent, their husband by 11 percent and a brother by 9 percent. The negative male role models were 26 percent from the Immediate Family, 24 percent from Secondary Relatives and 50 percent were Non-Relatives.

In Table 12 the reasons for selection are given. It shows that 40 percent of the time the explanations given were that the male was "no good, bad or immoral". Another 30 percent were put in the general category of being essentially irresponsible. Lower-class Negro women often see the "irresponsible" male and tend to view him with contempt. Some quotes taken from the respondents give a sharper dimension to their feelings about negative male role models. "He has no respect for his family"

(neighbor), "stupid idiot-no good-doesn't support us" (husband) and "no ambition, no aim in life" (uncle).

Negative Female Models. The mothers were asked "of all the people you actually know or have known who would you like least to have a daughter grow up to be like?" And they were asked why they made their choices. Fifty-nine percent named a neighbor or friend, 8 percent a mother-in-law or sister-in-law and 6 percent said themselves. Only 12 percent of those named were in the Immediate Family, with 26 percent Secondary Relatives and 62 percent Non-Relative.

The respondents gave many different reasons for selecting various women as negative role models. Table 13 shows that the most common categories were "sexual immorality" (16 percent), "lazy and undependable" (15 percent) and "selfish, snob and vain" (13 percent). Some quotes are "no morals-poor example for her children" (neighbor), "she is very wild and common" (friend), "she is a bad mother, no self respect, very lazy" (sister-in-law).

Table 14 presents the distribution of positive and negative role models by their family relationships to the mothers. One thing that appears is that the family provides the positive models for most of the mothers while the non-family provides

most of the negative models. But Table 14 suggests that the respondents tended to go outside the family more often for both positive and negative role models for a daughter than for a son.

CONCLUSIONS

1. With very few exceptions the mothers interviewed felt that their children's experiences in the Head Start Program were highly positive and were having a significant influence on their children. The mothers especially liked the social development they could observe in their children and most of the mothers found nothing that they disliked about their children's experiences in school. Not only were the mothers satisfied but in almost all cases they reported that their children were also happy with being in school. Looking at the Head Start Program from the perspective of the mothers, it is an overwhelming success and what criticisms they did give were random and minor.

2. We were also interested in some of the relationships between child rearing in the home and the more formal aspects of learning. It was clear that being a mother was of great importance to most of our respondents and that their most common problems centered around discipline and the economic problems of rearing their children.

3. The interrelationship of the importance of the mother in the home and the teacher in the school is reflected in the findings that while the mothers perceived themselves as most important in influencing their children, the teachers were a close second.

4. It is clear that the formal functions of learning take place in the school with some help from within the home. But beyond that there are no significant community agencies that the mothers turn to for help in the formal or informal education of their child.

5. It is also clear that the mothers are aware of the limitations for their children's futures which are undoubtedly influenced to a great extent by their being Negro and lower class. This was shown in the finding that while three-quarters of the mothers would like to see their children get a college education only one-quarter think that such will actually happen.

6. In asking the mothers about well known people as role models for their children it seems that the civil rights movement has been of great importance, but the male models selected are those in the more moderate wing of the civil rights movement. The role models for the females primarily come from the entertainment fields, but one would suspect that as more opportunities

open up for both the Negro male and female there will be a change in role model types. This is illustrated by the fact that if this study had been done twenty years ago, the civil rights models, both positive and negative, would not have been found to the extent that they were in the group of Negro mothers studied.

7. When the respondents were asked about models they have actually known, the positive values of economically responsible male roles and maternally responsible female roles show their importance. These findings fit with what we know from previous research about the lower class Negro family.

TABLE 1

Mothers' Responses as to How They Think Their Child's Experience in Head Start Has Influenced Him

Item	No.	Per cent
Getting along better with other children	71	29
More interest in things	50	20
More self responsibility	49	20
Better manners and more cooperative	39	16
Expresses himself better	36	15
	245*	100

*When the No.'s are greater than 200 it is because some interviewees gave more than one response to a question.

TABLE 2

Mothers' Responses to What They Liked Best About Their Child Being in the Head Start Program

Item	No.	Per cent
His self improvement	85	36
His chance to meet other children	47	20
Away from me for a few hours	29	13
Becoming more independent	28	12
Other reasons	43	19
	232	100

TABLE 3

Mothers' Responses to: What Does Your Child Like Most About School?

Item	No.	Per cent
Drawing and coloring	63	25
Stories, toys and music	54	21
Playing with other children	47	19
The teacher	42	16
Other things	48	19
	254	100

TABLE 4

First, Second and Third Choices as to Persons Having Greatest Influence on Child

Significant Others	1st Choice		2nd Choice		3rd Choice	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Mother	112	57	57	29	9	4
Father	27	14	41	21	40	21
Teacher	40	21	38	20	58	30
Grandmother	6	3	21	10	18	9
Brother or Sister	1	1	14	7	42	21
Others	9	4	24	13	28	15
Totals	195	100	195	100	195	100

TABLE 5

The Average (Median) Number of Hours Per Day Spent by Children in Selected Activities

Item	Number of hours
School work at home	.64 hours
Playing by himself	.88 "
Watching television	2.18 "
Playing with other children	3.03 "
Sleeping	9.90 "

TABLE 6

Reasons Why Mothers Would Like a Son to Grow Up Like a Well Known Male Role Model

Item	No.	Per cent
High standards, high morals and/or courage	70	29
Helped the Negro race	64	28
High talent and/or good at his job	46	19
Intelligent and/or good personality	33	14
Famous and/or wealthy	26	10
	239	100

TABLE 7

Reasons Why a Mother Would Like a Daughter to Grow Up Like a Well Known Female Role Model

Item	No.	Per cent
Talented, successful and/or great achievement	99	43
Good personality, sincere and/or inspirational	79	34
Helped the Negro race	22	10
High intelligence	16	7
Helps children	14	6
	230	100

TABLE 8

Reasons Why Mothers Would Not Like a Son to Grow Up Like a Well Known Male Role Model

Item	No.	Per cent
Too much mouth and/or braggert	75	38
Mean, bad, harmful and/or no morals	45	22
Bigot and/or racist	43	22
Phoney, crude and/or just don't like	39	18
	202	100

TABLE 9

Reasons Why Mothers Would Not Like a Daughter to Grow Up Like a Well Known Female Role Model

Item	No.	Per cent
No morals and/or steals husbands	93	51
Bigot and/or racist	47	26
Undesirable personality characteristics	31	17
Rejects her race as Negro	12	6
	183	100

TABLE 10

Reasons Why Mothers Would Like a Son to Grow Up Like a Man They Have Personally Known

Item	No.	Per cent
Good, kind, understanding and/or helps others	119	48
Hard worker and/or responsible	51	20
Intelligent and/or successful	46	18
Good morals, religious and/or dedicated	34	14
	250	100

TABLE 11

Reasons Why Mothers Would Like a Daughter to Grow Up Like a Woman They Have Personally Known

Item	No.	Per cent
Good, kind, understanding and/or cheerful	126	54
Helps others	41	18
Talented, high ambition and/or successful	34	15
Honest and/or responsible	19	8
Religious	12	5
	232	100

TABLE 12

Reasons Why Mothers Would Not Like Son to Grow Up Like a Man They Have Personally Known

Item	No.	Per cent
No good, bad, and/or immoral	92	40
Won't work, no ambition and/or irresponsible	69	30
Stingy, bad temper and/or selfish	41	17
Drunk or uses drugs	31	13
	233	100

TABLE 13

Reasons Why Mothers Would Not Like a Daughter to Grow Up Like a Woman They Have Personally Known

Item	No.	Per cent
Immoral and/or a prostitute	38	16
Lazy and/or undependable	35	15
Selfish, snob and/or vain	30	13
Bad mother	17	7
Variety of other reasons	110	49
	230	100

TABLE 14

Per Cent of Positive and Negative Role Model Choices

of People Known by Their Family Relationships to the Mothers

	Sex of Role Models	
Family Relationships	Males	Females
Positive Role Models		
Immediate family	49%	35%
Secondary relations	24%	25%
Non-related	27%	40%
Totals	100%	100%
Negative Role Models		
Immediate family	26%	12%
Secondary relations	24%	26%
Non-related	50%	62%
Totals	100%	100%